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Literally one-tenth part of this prodigious space would be ample for a concise and readable presentation of the theory, including all that could fairly be treated as evidence pertinent to the subject. And the author has in preparation a second volume possibly as bulky as the first! It is to be feared that a combination of such exasperating faults, prolixity and partiality, both in so extreme a form, will deprive the author of the hearing he really deserves. Within decent limits of space, and with less intolerant infatuation with his own opinion, so much erudition and enthusiasm might have served a useful purpose in correcting our one-sided ideas of Christian Gnosticism and its great founders, Simon of Gitta and his successors, in opening our eyes to the fact that Gnosticism must be treated not so much from the polemic point of view of the Fathers, but as an esoteric tendency in Christian thought, of which all shades could doubtless have been found within and without the church, from simple Pauline mysticism to extreme libertine antinomianism. The rise of the Johannine literature marks the period of discrimination between legitimate and illegitimate Gnosticism. However absurd, therefore, the supposition that the church of 150 A. D. and later could have taken over as its own the actual published and widely known system of its chief antagonist, we have much to learn from the critic who can assign to this literature its proper place in the gamut. This author in his independence, his first-hand acquaintance with the often obscure and inaccessible sources, his wide reading, and especially his enthusiastic sympathy for the much-abused, grossly misrepresented Gnostic, has admirable qualifications for the task. Were it possible for him to join with his erudition something of the judicial spirit, not merely in estimating the relative weight of argument and counter-argument, hypothesis and objection, but in eliminating obstructive masses of irrelevance and premature deduction, we might look for his further productions in this field with other sentiments than mere resignation to the inevitable. At least let there be some means in Vol. II, besides the bare table of contents covering a single page of Vol. I, for finding our way through this labyrinth.

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THE FIRST INTERPRETERS OF JESUS. By GEORGE HOLLEY GILBERT. New York: Macmillan, 1901. Pp. x + 429. \$1.25.

“WHEN Paul speaks of being free from the law, it is the law as an institute of righteousness which is meant, not the Old Testament as a

body of moral and spiritual truths." This sentence, chosen at random, illustrates Dr. Gilbert's admirable qualities. He has a fine power of discrimination and a fresh, direct, terse, and clear expression. He makes the learner understand; and the treatment of some matters, as for instance the words on "God is light" (p. 302), will stimulate many to homiletic application of the thought. Dr. Gilbert is resolved upon an impartial and historical determination of the contents of the New Testament, and the clearness and directness of apprehension and expression are congruous with the perfect sincerity of his purpose and method. The opening chapters present Paul's view of Christ, with a suggestion of polemic against older interpretations; but the adoption of this manner has obviously no other motive than that of securing perfect distinctness as to Paul's meaning. With possible dissent from some of Dr. Gilbert's critical views as to authorship and authenticity, one may gladly recognize in this work and the same author's *Revelation of Jesus* a valuable treatment of New Testament theology.

Nevertheless, this book follows the older type of such works, with methods which that branch of biblical science is now learning to discard. Paul is studied too much as if he were a scholastic writer. We hear, for example, of a "doctrine" of hope, and get all too much of patient detail and discrimination on the topic, as if Paul's joy in hopefulness of faith constituted a specific and differentiated notion in a system of ideas. A comparison of pp. 121 and 114 shows, however, that Dr. Gilbert cannot always differentiate it from a "doctrine of faith." An even more artificial result is a Pauline doctrine of prayer. To some extent, thus, the contents of epistles are presented in relations foreign to the apostle's mind. It is, indeed, a scientific method which is used, but not the method of that historical psychology which can make us see and feel as Paul saw and felt. It is an inductive study of the contents of documents, but it yields only materials for such a historical construction as restores the original impact of the thought.

Dr. Gilbert cannot admit antinomies in Paul's ideas. The new creation of the Christian is "a strong figure." The Christian's righteousness is the beginning of a career which ends in righteousness. This is put in a way which helps to a comprehension of the religious problem itself, but it is more than doubtful if it reproduces things as they lay in the mind of Paul. In some instances the meaning of Paul is settled by the use of a logic which he may not have shared. "If the sins which are transferred to Christ are forgiven to the sinner, they cannot also be *punished*." This is surely a Socinian method of exegesis,

and it results in a version which modernizes and even neutralizes the ardent apostle. The violent overstatement that Paul "explicitly sanctions" second marriages in 1 Cor. 7:8 is used to support the explanation of 1 Tim. 3:2, "husband of one wife," as forbidding unchastity in a bishop! Such a method easily finds election conditioned by foreknowledge, and, following Beyschlag, Dr. Gilbert softens the Pauline thought still further by a distinction between messianic privilege and eternal salvation. Some details seem to the reviewer clearly erroneous, as that Christ is the specific *object* of Christian faith (p. 113), or that "I" in Romans, chap. 7, is for Paul rather than an ideal argumentative "I," or the phrase "eloquence of angels" for 1 Cor. 13:1.

The main dissent, however, must be from the effort to harmonize by means of a rationalistic exegesis, and by the use of the *Lehrbegriff* method, with its artificializing, scholasticizing misconception of the biblical writers. The latter method confuses what is homiletic and what is doctrinal, what is religious and what is theological. It forgets that rhetorical feeling may change the word without changing the idea. The harmonizing exegesis seems to be influenced by interests that belong to apologetics or systematic theology. The more radical treatment that leaves inconsistencies to a modern reader need not impair the religious value of Scripture.

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THE BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By EZRA P. GOULD. ("New Testament Handbooks," edited by Shailer Mathews.) New York: Macmillan, 1900. Pp. xvi + 221. \$0.75.

AN OUTLINE OF NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY. By DAVID FOSTER ESTES. Boston: Silver, Burdett & Co., 1900. Pp. vi + 253. \$1.25.

THESE two books cover practically the same ground, but in a strikingly different way. Dr. Gould's is more comprehensive in its treatment and more vigorous in its style of thought. In fact, it is much more of a book than we should look for after working through his commentary on Mark.

It is a clear illustration of the principle that biblical theology, as a historical science, depends for its conclusions on the results of a historical criticism and a historical exegesis of its sources — a principle